>

Title: Need to safeguard the sanctity of Buddhist monuments in the Country.

PROF. JOGENDRA KAWADE (CHIMUR): Sir, India abounds in Buddhist monuments and caves, which we claim as our heritage. This attracts lakhs of tourists from Buddhist countries and other parts of the world. Most of the monuments depict life of Buddha and Boddhisatvas, and two of the monuments caves of Elephanta and Gharapuri are on the World Heritage List. This represents our ancient Buddhist culture and we are proud of the same.

Of late, a systematic attempt is being made by vested interests to defile the originality of the Indian culture by putting up idols of Hindu Gods and Goddesses as a result, the very basic fabric of the Indian culture is being affected. This should be stopped.

The Archaeological Survey of India is the agency for upkeeping, restoring and safeguarding the sanctity and originality of the monuments.

I, therefore, request that the monuments be handed over to the Buddhist organizations to upkeep, restore and safeguard the sanctity of these monuments.